2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

it was not." As "first aid" for a wound he prescribed the yolk of an egg and a lot of salt, well mixed and applied on a pad of wool; afterwards dress as above. It was very necessary, he said, to leave no splinters of bone in a wound. He described how he had spent two hours removing seventeen splinters from a fractured tibia with some little forceps he had made himself. You must work slowly and very carefully. You must watch your patient and compare his symptoms with those of others. So you learn. He had lately mended the leg of a horse by slinging it to the branch of a tree and putting the limb in a splint.

A shot through the knee, he declared, was usually fatal, and one through the ankle was difficult to make a good job of. But three fingers' breadth below the knee-cap and three above the ankle he could always be sure of curing.

For inflammation he used leeches freely. Had just treated a woman successfully for apoplexy. She was "dead" on one side and speechless. He bled her from the temple on the "dead" side and seven times from the arm on the other side. She was better next day, and he bled her five times. She completely recovered. Marash expounded head-surgery. The head, he said, is like an egg. There is a shell, then a skin, and then the meat. If this skin is broken through you can do nothing; if it is not and the fractured skull is only pressing on the brain it is curable. He demonstrated how a flap should be cut and turned back. The broken pieces of bone must be carefully removed and replaced by a piece of hard-dried bottle-gourd chosen to fit the shape. The ointment must be added and the flap replaced and dressed. Some men were very clever at cutting away bone. He had never cut away skull-bone himself. A man in Mirdita had lately cut away a large piece of the skull of an injured man successfully. He indicated the upper part of the left parietal. The "kirijee" boy from whom I had hired horses then told us that he had a piece of bottle-gourd in his head. Had been knocked on the head and stunned in a quarrel, and been unconscious till a "hekim" had taken out the broken bone. Now he said he never felt any trouble except that his head itched a good deal. I felt his head carefully, and there certainly was a hard edge to be found.

Marash Hutzi had a great reputation for curing wounds and certainly deserved it. It is of interest to find that a strictly antiseptic method was being used so long ago as his grandfather's time in the Albanian mountains when in England we still washed our wounds with any pump-water. Marash was over sixty. Trephining, I was told, was still practised to cure pains in the head, but I did not meet a case.

A dressing much used for slight wounds was olive oil in which a quantity of pounded leaves of the common St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) had been macerated in the sun. This seemed to have some

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

776 from one spring to another in the hope of propitiating
755 the various tutelary deities in charge of them.

776 The Dragoua are children who are born with
845 bunches of hair or feathers on their shoulders, by means of which they are able to fly, or at least to take tremendous leaps. The mother of such a child must, it is said, be very careful to keep secret its peculiarities, for, should they be observed by a stranger, the child would die, and in any case it will not be long lived. On stormy nights the Dragoua leave their cradles, or beds, and, rising into the air, fight with the Koutchédras, the contest often waxing so hot that they uproot trees to use as weapons, which are, on the following morning, found strewn on the ground.

826 Another curious belief current in Albania maintains the actual existence there of men with tails, either like those of goats or of horses. Persons retaining these appendages of their remote ancestors are held to be always short and broad of figure, untiring walkers, and endowed with great physical strength. Von Hahn was of opinion that this is not a mere vague popular superstition, but has a foundation in fact. "Soliman of Dragoti, one of my cavasses at Ioannina," he says,[1] "maintained that in his part of the country tailed men of this sort were often to be seen, and that he had himself a tailed cousin, whom he had often, in youth, when bathing together, pulled by this gift of nature. An even more trustworthy authority, Theodoris, who had in his younger days been a klepht on Pindus, related that in his band there was, for several years, an undersized, broad-

[1] *Albanesische Studien*, pp. 163-4.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

shouldered, fair-complexioned man, called Kapitan Yannaki (Captain Johnny), who was reputed to possess a tail. In order to convince themselves of the truth of this report, half a dozen of his comrades (for he was uncommonly strong) had fallen upon him together when he was taking his noon-nap, and he himself had taken part in this ocular inspection. He distinctly remembered seeing a goat-like tail about four finger-breadths long, covered on the outer side with short reddish-coloured hairs." M. Von Hahn's endeavours to see for himself such a *lusus naturæ* were in vain, and the Turkish military surgeons, who inspected annually hundreds of recruits from all parts of the country, confessed that no specimen of the tailed man had ever come under their notice.

The villagers of the Ritza tribe hold in great honour a kind of good genius of the house which they call the Vittóre (βιττόρε), a word which signifies "ancient," and seems to convey the idea of a survival of ancestor worship. The Vittóre is in reality a little thick snake with a speckled skin, which lives in the house walls and seldom leaves its hole. These snakes are believed to live in the same house from generation to generation. They are regarded with great reverence by the family, and especially by the women, who heap benedictions upon them, and predict joyful or sorrowful events according to the sounds made by this house genius. On hearing any unusual or unaccountable noise the women say, "It is the Vittóre." If all the members of a household die, and the house is left empty, or passes into other hands, the Vittóre, too, abandons it, never to return. When an old and much

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

penalties; and finally the conventions which govern the blood-feud. For the blood-feud has occupied from time immemorial, and no doubt still occupies, a very important place in Albanian life, providing the ultimate sanction in all cases in which personal honour is concerned, and on points of personal honour the Albanian is particularly sensitive; and the blood-feud is regulated by a number of very well understood even if unwritten rules and principles.

It is interesting to compare Albanian customary law with that of other headhunters, for the Albanians (see p. 230 below and Miss Durham, *Tribal Origins, etc.*, pp. 172 ff.) till recently at any rate were headhunters. The belief underlying headhunting generally is that life is a material substance residing *par excellence* in the head, and that the abstraction of an enemy's head enables the life-substance in it to be carried off to the head-taker's home to replenish the stock there and increase the fertility of its inhabitants, its crops, and its livestock. Incidentally a surplus of life-substance is necessary to beget children, and hence comes the importance of head-taking as a preliminary to marriage. The tuft left on the head by Albanians (p. 230). as by many Indian tribes and castes, by Chinese, American Indians and others, was probably left originally to shelter life-substance regarded as residing, as in the case of Samson, in the hair. Some Naga tribesmen of Assam give the same account of the purpose of this uncut tuft as do Mrs Hasluck's Albanians, that it is kept to carry away the head by. But this explanation has no doubt arisen from the fact that it is so used in practice. Among the Assam headhunters the vendetta is a communal or a village affair rather than a family one, and there is no taboo on taking the heads of women in pursuance of it, but quite the contrary. In this respect the Albanian practice is more suggestive of that of the Pathans of the North-West Frontier of India. Otherwise the unwritten law of Albania has much similarity with that of south-east Asia and Oceania. The communal destruction of an offender's house at which all members of the community must assist, for instance, is widely distributed from Assam to New Zealand; the banishment of a murderer for life or for a term of years according to the circumstances of the homicide, the association of compurgators with an accused person in the taking of an oath, the assessment of blood-money, are used in the Assam hills much as in the Albanian mountains, and probably in many other primitive areas also. But Albanian customary law is of particular

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

it is the staff of life is the oldest, and religious conceptions come later. As essential to life, it was suited to oath-taking; as shown by the oath 'May the bread kill me', it had power to punish perjury with death.

Two more formulae remain to be mentioned. The first was 'By my head', and the second 'By the head of my son'. The former was thought justifiable; one might do as one pleased with one's own head. But a man who swore on his son's head was strongly disapproved of; only a low fellow, it was thought, would risk his child's life by such an oath. Nothing less was involved, as appears in the following full formula for a land dispute. 'By the head of the son that I have, this land is mine. If it is not mine, may I weep for the son that I have.'[1]

When the time came to take the oath, both Catholics and Moslems behaved as if about to perform an act of worship. Catholics removed their caps and made the oath bareheaded; they also crossed themselves as they began. Sunni Moslems performed the ceremonial ablutions incumbent on them before they pray. By their preliminaries the Catholics sought to indicate respect for the Deity; by theirs the Sunnis sought also to make their oath binding —without them, so they believed, it would be null and void. The Moslems of Martanesh, being Bektashis, did not perform the ceremonial ablutions, but suspect and compurgator when taking the oath in a house had to stand facing Mecca, with the witnesses behind them. As each man's turn came, he advanced towards the Koran or loaf of bread, knelt, and laying hand on the book or bread repeated the prescribed words. This reverence for the sacred emblem was shown by both religions, sometimes with quaint little ceremonies. Thus, when the Catholics of Lurë swore in the open on the Gospel, as was their common practice, they picked up some grass or other greenery and held it over the book while they recited the oath; the purpose of the grass is not clear.[2] After the conversion of Vinjollë to Islam from Catholicism oaths were sworn indifferently, as has already been said, on the Gospel or Koran. When at a house, the sacred book was laid on fresh grass near the house or on a clean place in the farmyard. Each oath-taker kissed it three times, before venturing to put his hand on it and repeat the oath.

[1] The oath on a son's head is common to the Moslem world and if perjured involves the son as well as his father in eternal damnation.

[2] Possibly it involved the false swearer in withering like the plucked grass.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

Again, a woman from Tërbac, near Elbasan, hearing that her son
562 had been killed at a third person's instigation, took his revolver and
*628 killed the instigator. Unfortunately for her, the date was about
[682] 1923 when a modern government was already functioning; she was arrested and tried for murder, but in view of the circumstances she was condemned to no more than a year and a half's imprisonment. The public were astonished to find that the government had punished a woman on much the same terms as a man.

[593] Assuming that a woman could steel herself to murder anyone, it is natural to find her avenging her father, son or brother. Given primitive Albanian ideas about the proprieties between husband and wife, and the feeling that the wife remained a member of her father's household, it is somewhat surprising to find one avenging her husband. A woman of western Mat went one day to the bazaar and there saw the man who had murdered her husband. In spite of the press of people she drew a revolver and shot him dead; as she had come provided with the weapon, there is little doubt that she did not act on the spur of the moment. About 1883 Fatime Almetaj, a woman born in Kostejë near Martanesh and married in Përvall, was busy baking one day while her husband talked to a neighbour. On hearing a gunshot she rushed out to find her husband already dead and the neighbour running away. She ran inside, seized her husband's rifle and again rushed out. The neighbour had already reached his own doorstep when she fired. As soon as she saw him fall dead, she re-entered her house and resumed her baking; her husband had been avenged, there were others in the family to feed, and the dough was getting cold. In neither of these cases do records show whose life the enemy took in return for the one she had taken; by right it should have been one of the males in her husband's family.

593 In certain cases both the avenger and the expiator of a murder
*628 might be drawn from outside the household directly concerned.
[826] For instance, if a murderer and his brother were separated, the avenger might kill the latter while his blood was boiling, a period estimated in Dibër at one hour and in Mirditë and elsewhere at twenty-four hours. When his blood had cooled he must not molest the separated brother, and might be required to find a guarantor that he would not do so. Conversely, a man separated from his murdered brother might avenge him during the regulation period, but not afterwards.

613 Sometimes the rule of 'boiling blood' was extended to larger
*628

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

CHAPTER XXIII

BLOOD FEUD

II. COURSE OF THE FEUD

The fatal shot fired, a murderer's life was in such instant danger from the avenger that it behoved him to fly with all speed. But often his 'blood seized him' so that 'his legs gave way under him' and he was rooted to the spot from shock. Custom therefore prescribed in Shkodër, Lumë and Godolesh that he must drop on the ground a cartridge or an article of clothing such as his fez, sash, or handkerchief; in Elbasan, Shpat and Çermenikë that he must lick the muzzle of his rifle or pistol; alternatively, in Elbasan that he must inhale the smoke of the gunpowder or let his comrades slap his face; in Labinot that he must hold the cartridge case in his mouth and bite his little finger and suck the blood, and in Mat that he must eat a little gunpowder. That done successfully, 'his blood was set free', 'the seizure passed', and he was able to run away.

When an article of clothing was left behind, it served to identify the murderer; where none was left, word had to be sent to the victim's family. It was everywhere 'held dishonourable' to kill and not to tell. It was also thought unfair for reasons that varied with the locality. In Mirditë the victim's relatives might go mad if they did not know the identity of the murderer; in north Albania the murderer's kinsmen would not know to hide while the avenger's blood was boiling; in south Albania the crime might be laid at the wrong door. Besides, the normal murder was matter for boasting; committed only to avenge some wrong or insult, it showed that the murderer was spirited enough to resent ill-treatment.

Latterly, when the government was attempting to repress murder, the murderer, certain of arrest, left no token and did not inform the relatives. The community, however, was always on the watch and from its members' observation of those who came from the direction of the shots and from their knowledge of the whereabouts of the victim's enemies at the time, the murderer's identity was established—at all events to the satisfaction of the community.

In the early days of a feud the father or brother of the victim might in his furious rage kill the murderer and shoot a second time

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Contemporary Macedonians EF8
Montenegrins EF5

757 278 enough creature near Scutari, was esteemed as very good for consumptive patients.

A [262] The flesh of the common land tortoise was thought of great value for all convalescents. When I came out of hospital Marko had prepared a savoury stew for my supper. I ate heartily. "Thank God!" cried the good old man, "you have eaten 'breshké,' and you will soon be strong and well." He fetched the shell of the large tortoise which had provided my meal.

A [136] So common are these tortoises that an Albanian proverb says: "There is no mountain without a wolf and no plain without a tortoise."

A 164 136 *Diseases.*—Intestinal troubles of all kinds are rife in the Balkans, owing to bad food, and in some districts to a morbid appetite for very acid food. Intestinal worms—tape, thread, and round—are very common. A preparation of buckthorn is given.

A 165 853 Infant mortality is excessively high all through the Balkans. If a mother can nurse her child till the flocks are giving milk plentifully it stands a chance; if not, it is fed on parboiled maize-flour and heavy maize-bread. The abdomen swells greatly, and the child often dies; and, as I have stated, desire to preserve the child from the Evil Eye causes many to be half-suffocated in the cradle. Only the toughest survive, and they are very tough. The Albanians, Montenegrins, and Macedonians, whom I have had charge of as sick or wounded, do not suffer from shock, nor are they as sensitive to pain as West Europeans.

A 854 754 M CM A 151

A 757 752 *Wounds.*—The Albanian tribesmen were far cleverer with wounds than with sickness. They had a traditional antiseptic treatment which was very successful. Old Marash Hutzi of Hoti, who had learnt the art from his grandfather, explained it to me. A wound must never be touched with water; it must be thoroughly washed out with rakia (brandy distilled from grapes). He judged the state of a wound by smelling it carefully. When well washed—when it perforated a limb he poured rakia right through—he dressed it with an ointment he made from white wax, olive oil, pine resin, and a decoction of the bark of green elder twigs. If deep, he plugged it with wool soaked in this ointment. In hot weather the dressings should be changed twice a day; and so long as the wound was foul he washed it daily with rakia. He saved a leg—compound comminuted fracture caused by horse-kick—which the Turkish military surgeon was going to amputate and made a quite usable, though rather shortened, limb of it. The grateful patient gave him thirty francs, the biggest fee the good old man had ever received. He had made his own instruments—some probes, forceps, a small saw made from a barrel hoop, and some knives.

A 757 826 752 From his grandfather's and his own experience he had a fair knowledge of where the main arteries ran, "where it was safe to cut and where